



FISH AND GAME NEWS RELEASE

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DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 15, 2003

DOVE HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

All special dove hunting opportunities on State wildlife areas and Game Bird Heritage Program special hunts in the San Joaquin Valley are being provided to hunters on one combined News Release. Changes this year include: only **two** hunters may apply as a party; ONE JUNIOR ONLY hunt near Winton; and the Pilibos hunts where a drawing will be held for the first **two** days of the season (September 1 -2, 2003). Hunters will still be selected for **only one** hunt area and hunt period. This is to provide more hunters with the opportunity to participate in these special hunts. All hunts are free. When applying for the hunts, you must indicate if you would like to bring a guest hunter. Applications may include up to **two** hunters. See instructions under "How to Apply."

Game Bird Heritage Program Special Hunts

These hunts were developed in cooperation with the Panoche Water and Drainage District (PWDD), Department of Water Resources (DWR), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), the Kern Water Bank Authority (KWBA), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Southern Tulare County Sportsman Association (STCSA). Providing hunter opportunity and hunter access is a major goal of the Game Bird Heritage Program. These hunts are made possible through the purchase of an upland game bird stamp by hunters.

Winton - Juniors only. This area is located approximately six miles north of Winton, adjacent to the Merced River. Forty acres of safflower were grown by a private landowner for a special **juniors only** dove hunt. One hunt is scheduled for opening day (September 1), from 12:00 p.m. to sunset. This hunt can accommodate 40 hunters. The hunt is as follows: **Hunt A:** September 1, afternoon.

Firebaugh - This area is located approximately 11 miles northwest of Firebaugh, adjacent to the Delta Mendota Canal on PWDD land. Seventy five acres of safflower were grown for doves and other wildlife. Two hunts are scheduled for opening day (September 1): one-half hour before sunrise to noon and 1:00 p.m. to sunset. **After opening day, the area will be open to dove hunting, and a permit will not be required.** These hunts can accommodate 60 hunters, 30 in the morning and 30 in the afternoon. The hunts are as follows: **Hunt B:** September 1, morning; **Hunt C:** September 1, afternoon.

Pilibos Wildlife Area - The Pilibos Wildlife Area is located approximately 12 miles west of Mendota adjacent to the California Aqueduct. Approximately 60 acres of safflower were grown for doves and other wildlife. Two hunts are scheduled for opening day (September 1), and two hunts on September 2: one-half hour before sunrise to noon and 1:00 p.m. to sunset. These hunts can accommodate 50 hunters each day (September 1 and September 2), 25 in the morning and 25 in the afternoon. **After September 2, the area (except for the closed zone) will be open to dove hunting. A permit is required and may be obtained at the self-registration booth located in the parking lot.** The hunts are as follows: **Hunt D:** September 1, morning; **Hunt E:** September 1, afternoon; **Hunt F:** September 2, morning; **Hunt G:** September 2, afternoon.

Tranquillity - This area is located approximately three miles northwest of Tranquillity on USBR land. Sixty acres of safflower were grown for doves and other wildlife. Two hunts are scheduled for opening day (September 1): one-half hour before sunrise to noon and 1:00 p.m. to sunset. **After opening day, the area will be open to dove hunting, and a permit will not be required.** These hunts can accommodate 50 hunters, 25 in the morning and 25 in the afternoon. The hunts are as follows: **Hunt H:** September 1, morning; **Hunt I:** September 1, afternoon.

Huron - This area is located near Huron on land owned by the USBR and managed by the DWR. Sixty acres of safflower were grown for doves and other wildlife. Two hunts are scheduled for opening day (September 1): one-half hour before sunrise to noon, and 1:00 p.m. to sunset. **After opening day, the entire area will be open to dove hunting, and a permit will not be required.** These hunts can accommodate 50 hunters, 25 in the morning and 25 in the afternoon. The hunts are as follows: **Hunt J:** September 1, morning; **Hunt K:** September 1, afternoon.

Bakersfield - This area is located approximately 15 miles west of Bakersfield on land owned and managed by the KWBA.

Approximately 60 acres of safflower were grown for doves and other wildlife. Two hunts are scheduled for opening day (September 1) and two hunts on September 2: one-half hour before sunrise to noon and 1:00 p.m. to sunset. These hunts can accommodate 70 hunters each day (September 1 and September 2), 35 in the morning and 35 in the afternoon. The hunts are as follows: **Hunt L:** September 1, morning; **Hunt M:** September 1, afternoon; **Hunt N:** September 2, morning; **Hunt O:** September 2, afternoon. **This area is not open after September 2.**

Success Lake Wildlife Area - The Success Lake Wildlife Area is located approximately eight miles east of Porterville and consists of approximately 1,400 acres open to hunting on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' land. Approximately 75 acres of wheat were grown by the STCSA to provide feeding areas for doves. There is no hunter quota for this area, and a permit is not required. For additional information on any of the Game Bird Heritage Program special hunts listed above, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Management section, at (559) 243-4005, extension 132 or 133.

State Wildlife Areas

Mendota Wildlife Area will be divided into two areas, with the Traction Ranch portion being limited to 50 reservations in the morning. Permits for this area will be available through the drawing. The remaining portion of the Wildlife Area will be open to the first-come, first-serve hunters. The hunt is as follows: **Hunt P:** September 1, morning.

For additional information about this hunt, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Mendota Wildlife Area, at (559) 655-4645.

Los Banos Wildlife Area will have two designated hunt areas on opening day, September 1, with a total hunter capacity of 100. The remainder of the area will be open to provide hunting for non-reservation hunters. Total capacity of the area will be 300 hunters. The area will remain open for birding, sightseeing, fishing, frogging and dog training. However, camping will be restricted to the main parking lot Sunday, August 31. The hunt is as follows: **Hunt Q:** September 1.

Salt Slough Unit of North Grasslands Wildlife Area will be divided into three sections (northern, middle and southern sections) with reservations being issued for 150 hunters for opening day (September 1). Section selection will be made at the check station. Any space available at one-half hour before legal shoot time will be filled by non-reservations hunters. Section quotas will be filled until 12:00 p.m., after 12:00 p.m. the area will be open to free-roam hunting. The hunt is as follows: **Hunt R:** September 1.

China Island Unit of North Grasslands Wildlife Area. Reservations are not issued or required for opening day, September 1. Quota for dove hunting will be 300 hunters.

O'Neill Forebay Wildlife Area will be limited to 75 hunters on September 1, with all permits issued by a lottery drawing that morning at the parking lot two hours before shoot time. Refills will be allowed as persons leave the area. The area will be open everyday during the September dove season.

Little Panoche Reservoir, San Luis Reservoir, Dos Amigos Wildlife Area and Upper and Lower Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Areas will be open to dove hunting throughout the legal season without reservations. Sign in at the self-registration booth. The number of hunters in each area will not be regulated.

Gadwall and Volta Wildlife Areas will be closed to all dove hunting.

For additional information on the Los Banos, Salt Slough, China Island, O'Neill Forebay, Little Panoche Reservoir, San Luis Reservoir, Dos Amigos Wildlife Area and Upper and Lower Cottonwood Creek wildlife areas, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Los Banos Wildlife Area, at (209) 826-0463.

HOW TO APPLY

To be eligible for the drawing, hunters must submit in writing their choice of hunts listed in order of preference. Hunters will be selected by a random computerized drawing for one hunt only. Applications may include up to two hunters applying as a party. When applying for the hunts, provide the following information for **yourself and your guest**: (1) hunt area (i.e., Huron, morning [J]), (2) name, (3) address, (4) daytime and evening telephone number, (5) 2003-2004 hunting license number and (6) if you have a mobility impairment and need special accommodations.

Hunters may only apply **once**, either as an applicant **or** as a guest for each area and hunt period. Applying for the same hunt area and period more than once will disqualify you from the drawing. Please make your selection(s) **carefully**. Changes **cannot** be made after the drawing. Applications must be returned to:

San Joaquin Valley Dove Hunts
Department of Fish and Game
1234 East Shaw Avenue
Fresno, California 93710

Applications must be received by Friday, August 8, at 5:00 p.m. to be eligible for the drawing. **Only successful applicants will be notified** and supplied with additional information about their hunt. Hunters under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult (18 years of age or older). An upland game bird stamp is required of all hunters, **except** junior license holders. Application attached.

This information and application can be found by visiting the Department's web page at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov>